

REMARKS

Applicant respectfully requests reconsideration of the present application in view of the foregoing amendments and in view of the reasons which follow. After entering this Response, claims 1-21 remain pending in this application.

I. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 112.

On page 2 of the Office Action, Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112 as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. The examiner states "Claim 7 contains the trademark/trade name Kevlar." By this Response, Applicant amends Claim 7 to overcome the rejection. Applicant respectfully request withdrawal of the rejection.

II. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102.

On page 3 of the Office Action, Claims 1, 16, and 20-21 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 4,567,894 ("Bergman"). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Bergman fails to disclose the claimed invention as recited in Claims 1, 16, and 20-21.

Bergman describes a mobile patient transport table having a latch cylinder assembly 55 mounted to the table. The latch cylinder of assembly 59 includes a latch hook 58 which is received by a docking assembly 16 located on the housing 10 of an imaging system. The latch cylinder assembly 59 is the only coupling mechanism that is mounted to the table. There is no suggestion or teaching that the table includes more than one coupling mechanism.

In contrast, Claim 1 requires at least two coupling mechanisms, a first coupling mechanism and a second coupling mechanism. As amended, Claim 1 recites: "a first coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member" and "a second coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member". As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is not proper. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

Referring now to Claim 16 and Claims 20 and 21 which depend from Claim 16, Claim 16 as amended recites: "a patient support surface comprising a first end compatible with a first coupling arrangement on an imaging system and a second end compatible with a second coupling arrangement on a second imaging system." As indicated above, Bergman only discloses a patient support surface with one end compatible with a coupling arrangement. As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is not proper. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 4 of the Office Action, Claims 9-10, 12-13, and 15 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by U.S. Patent No. 5,490,297 ("Bradcovich et al."). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Bradcovich et al. fails to disclose the claimed invention as recited in Claims 9-10, 12-13, and 15.

Bradcovich et al. discloses a mobile imaging table for transporting a patient to imaging systems. Referring to column 5, lines 42-62, Bradcovich et al. teaches that only one end of the mobile table is placed next to the imaging device. Specifically, Bradcovich et al. states:

When the mobile table 20 with a patient aboard reaches an imaging site, (i.e., the site of an imaging apparatus such as a CT scan, an MRI device, etc.) the upper frame member 26 is raised to a suitable height for imaging. This may vary from one imaging apparatus to another and therefore may require lifting of the upper frame member either to the full extent possible or to some intermediate position. Table top 28 rises and is lowered with the upper frame 26. Raising and lowering are accomplished by means of the first drive means 32 as previously described. Then the table top 28 is moved by means of the second means 34 from its first or retracted position to its second or extended position, in which the table top and a patient lying thereon in position for imaging. When imaging has been completed, the process is reversed. Table top 28 is returned to its first or retracted position, and then the upper frame member 26 and table top 28 are lowered to the lowermost position for transport of the patient back to a patient bed.

The imaging table of the present invention can be used for imaging in either a tunnel-type imaging apparatus or in an imaging apparatus having open sides and one open end.

(Bradcovich et al., Col. 5, lines 42-62.)

Thus, while Bradcovich et al. mentions that the imaging table can be used for different types of imaging systems, there is no disclosure whatsoever of a first end configured to be coupled to a magnetic resonance imaging device and a second end opposite the first end being configured to be coupled to an X-ray imaging device.

Claims 10, 12-13, and 15, which depend from Claim 9, all require "wherein the first end is configured to be coupled to a magnetic resonance imaging device and the second end is configured to be a coupled to an X-ray imaging device." Bradcovich et al. does not disclose this. As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) is not proper, and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

III. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103.

On page 6 of the Office Action, Claims 2, 4, and 5 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of Bradcovich et al. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Neither Bergman nor Bradcovich et al. alone or in combination disclose, suggest, or teach the claimed invention as recited in Claims 2, 4, and 5.

The Examiner states that Bergman does not disclose "the elongated member comprising a cradle and a table wherein the cradle rests on the table." However, as described above, Bergman does not disclose all of the limitations of Claim 1 from which Claims 2, 4, and 5 all depend. Specifically, Bergman fails to disclose a first coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member and a second coupling mechanism attached to the elongated member. As also discussed above, Bradcovich et al. also fails to disclose a patient transport table having two coupling mechanisms attached to the elongated member of the table. As such, Bergman and Bradcovich et al. alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest, or teach the invention as recited in Claims 2, 4, and 5. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 6 of the Office Action, Claim 7 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of U.S. Patent No. 4,145,612 ("Cooper").

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Neither Bergman nor Cooper alone or in combination disclose, suggest, or teach the claimed invention as recited in Claim 7.

As discussed above, Bergman fails to disclose Applicant's claimed limitations in Claim 1, from which Claim 7 depends. Cooper does not teach the presence of first and second coupling mechanisms attached to the elongated member of a patient transport system. As such, Bergman and Cooper alone or in combination fail to disclose, suggest, or teach the invention recited in Claim 7. Applicant respectfully requests the withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 7 of the Office Action, Claim 8 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bergman in view of U.S. Patent No. 5,210,893 ("Uosaki et al."). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Neither Bergman nor Uosaki et al. alone or in combination disclose, suggest, or teach the invention recited in Claim 8.

Claim 8 depends from Claim 1. As previously discussed, Bergman fails to disclose Applicant's claimed limitations in Claim 1. Uosaki et al. fails to disclose, suggest, or teach the missing limitations that Bergman lacks. As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is not proper and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 7 of the Office Action, Claim 11 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bradovich et al. in view of Cooper. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Neither Bradovich et al. nor Cooper alone or in combination disclose, suggest, or teach the invention as recited in Claim 11.

Claim 11 depends from Claim 9. As described above, Bradovich et al. fails to disclose Applicant's claimed limitations from Claim 9. Specifically, Bradovich et al. does not disclose a first end opposite a second end where the first end is configured to be coupled to an MRI device and a second end is configured to be coupled to an X-ray imaging device. Cooper does not disclose these limitations that are lacking from Bradovich et al. As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is not proper. Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

On page 8 of the Office Action, Claim 14 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Bradcovich et al. in view of Bergman. Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection. Neither Bradcovich et al. nor Bergman alone or in combination disclose, suggest, or teach the invention as recited in Claim 14.

Claim 14 depends from Claim 9. As previously discussed, Bradcovich et al. fails to disclose, suggest, or teach all of the limitations of Claim 9. Bergman also fails to disclose a patient support member having a first end opposite a second end where the first end is configured to be coupled to an MRI device and the second end is configured to be coupled to an X-ray imaging device. Both Bradcovich et al. and Bergman only disclose the use of one end of a patient transport table to be coupled to an imaging system. As such, a rejection under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) is not proper and Applicant respectfully requests withdrawal of the rejection.

IV. Objections.

On page 8 of the Office Action, Claims 3, 6, and 17-19 are objected to as being dependent upon a rejected base claim but would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims. By this amendment, Applicant amends Claims 3, 6, and 17-19 as suggested in the Office Action to be in allowable form.

Applicant believes that the present application is now in condition for allowance. Favorable reconsideration of the application as amended is respectfully requested.

The Examiner is invited to contact the undersigned by telephone if it is felt that a telephone interview would advance the prosecution of the present application.

Respectfully submitted,

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